MARVEL

Doctor Strange

DAMNATION

#2

NICK SPENCER
DONNY CATES
SZYMON KUDRANSKI
DAN BROWN

IT'S IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT THIS ALL STARTED WITH THE BEST OF INTENTIONS.
I HAD PLANNED TO RESURRECT LAS VEGAS FROM THE ASHES. AND IT WORKED! I REALLY FEEL LIKE I NEED TO POINT THAT OUT. EVEN IF, ADMITTEDLY, THERE WERE SOME HICCUPS--
--NAMELY, THAT SOMETHING ELSE CAME BACK WITH IT.
SOMETHING STRAIGHT FROM THE PIT OF HELL.
AND WHERE HELL GOES...SO GOES MEPHISTO.
WHEN THE CITY WAS DESTROYED, IT FELL TO HIS REALM. AND WHEN I BROUGHT IT BACK HE WAS...NOT THRILLED.
HIS CORRUPTING INFLUENCE SPREAD ACROSS THE CITY, TEMPTING EVERYONE IN IT INTO SIN, AND THEN PUNISHING THEM FOR IT.
SO THIS IS HOW I FOUND MYSELF PLAYING CARDS AGAINST THE DEVIL, WITH THE FATE OF MILLIONS AT STAKE.
AND WITH SO MUCH ON THE LINE, I DID THE ONLY THING ANY SENSIBLE PERSON WOULD DO...
...I CHEATED.

TURNED OUT ABOUT AS WELL AS YOU'D EXPECT.

APPARENTLY MEPHISTO LIKES TO DEAL WITH CHEATERS THE SAME WAY ANY OLD-SCHOOL CASINO BOSS WOULD--

--GETTING ONE OF HIS ENFORCERS TO BREAK MY LEGS.

HIS "ENFORCERS" IN THIS CASE BEING A GROUP OF AVENGERS HE'S TURNED INTO GHOST RIDERS.

WHICH, YES, AGAIN, IS TECHNICALLY MY FAULT--

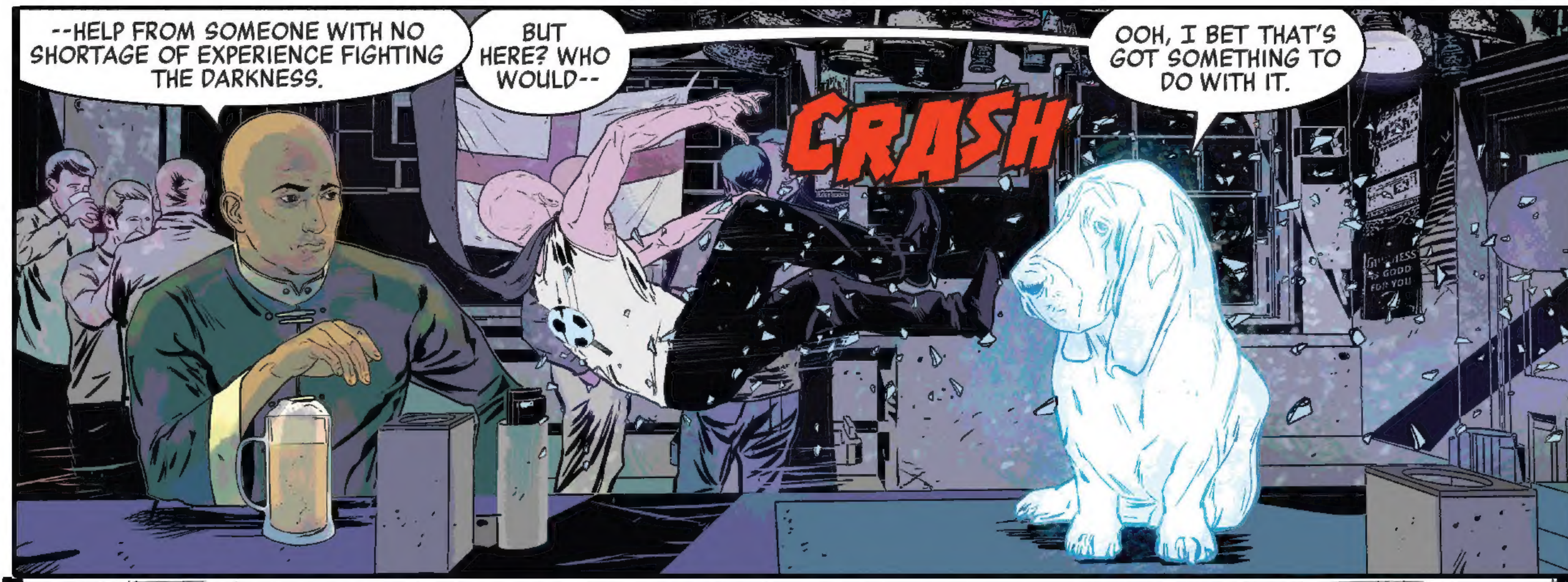
BUT MAYBE NOW'S NOT THE TIME TO RUB THAT IN.

MAYBE NOW, I COULD USE SOME FRIENDLY ASSISTANCE--

--TOO BAD I DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS LEFT.

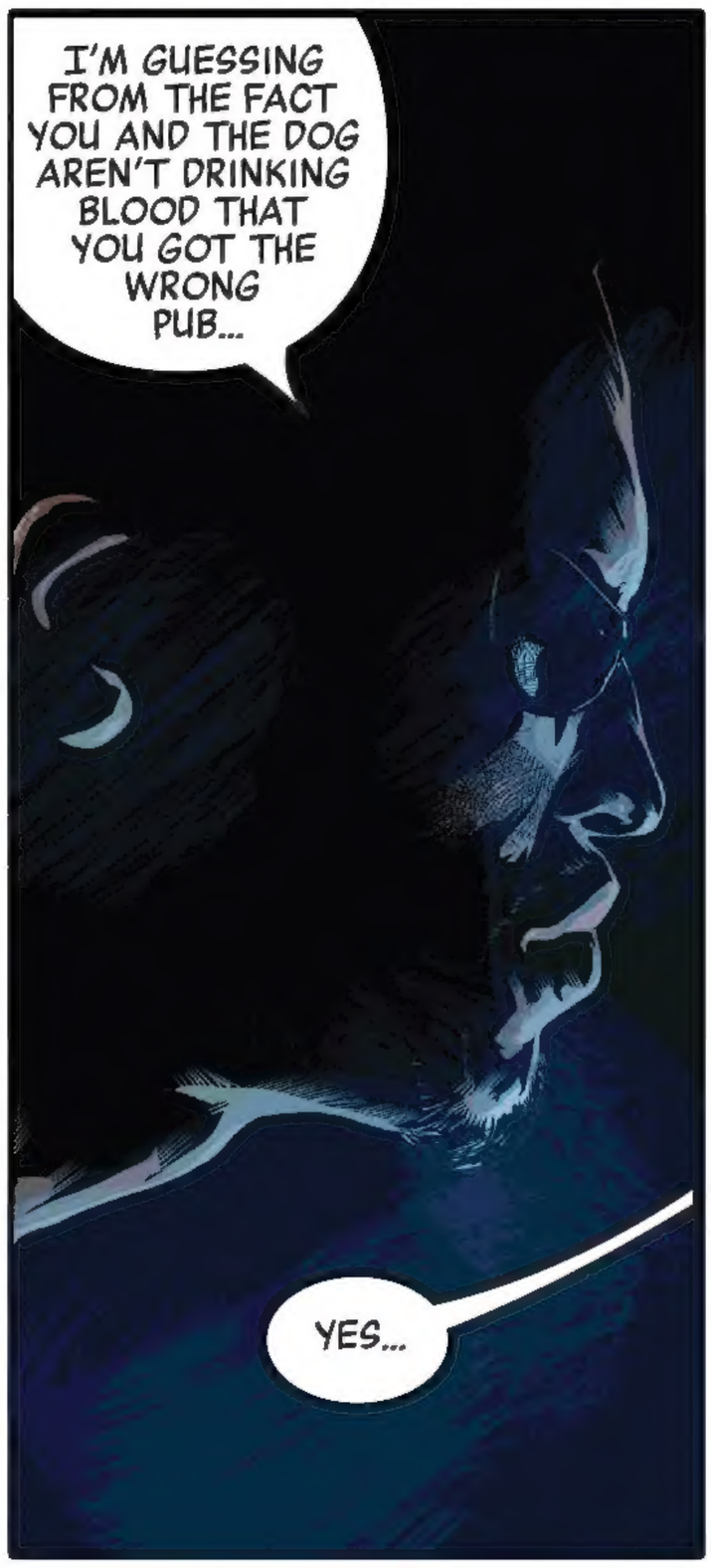
OKAY, WONG, MUCH AS I LOVE SPENDING TIME IN ***ANY*** COUNTRY WHERE DOGS GET TO SIT AT BARS-- WHY AM I SITTING AT A BAR AGAIN?

I TOLD YOU, BATS-- I WILL HELP STEPHEN, EVEN IF HE MIGHT PREFER I DIDN'T. BUT MEPHISTO IS A POWERFUL ENEMY. WE WILL NEED HELP TO DEFEAT HIM--


--HELP FROM SOMEONE WITH NO SHORTAGE OF EXPERIENCE FIGHTING THE DARKNESS.
BUT HERE? WHO WOULD--
CRASH
OOH, I BET THAT'S GOT SOMETHING TO DO WITH IT.

HAGH!
BLADE.
DAYWALKING SOCCER-HOOLIGAN-VAMPIRE SLAYER.

TOTTENHAM, TOTTENHAM 'TIL I DI--AAAYEEEE!!!


I'M GUESSING FROM THE FACT YOU AND THE DOG AREN'T DRINKING BLOOD THAT YOU GOT THE WRONG PUB...
YES...

AND THERE'S THE FACT THAT I SUPPORT ARSENAL.
I'LL TRY AND OVERLOOK IT. LONG TIME NO SEE, WONG. I'M GUESSING YOU'VE GOT A JOB FOR ME?

THE MISTY MOUNTAINS OF WUNDAGORE.

WE UNDERSTAND HOW IMPORTANT YOUR WORK IS, YES--AND WE DO HATE TO INTRUDE--

YEAH, YOU LOOK PRETTY BUSY.

ROARR!

CAN'T ARGUE WITH THAT.

LAS VEGAS IS IN TURMOIL--THE PEOPLE ARE TEARING THEMSELVES APART IN THE STREETS.

AND THAT'S NOT EVEN GETTIN' INTO THE DEMONS--

BOOM

SOMEBODY SAID DEMONS, YEAH?

WELL, DON'T WORRY, BOYS--ELSA BLOODSTONE'S GONNA FIX YOU UP. RIGHT AFTER A LONG, HOT SHOWER.

ELSA BLOODSTONE. MONSTER HUNTER. GROSS.

NEW YORK CITY.
DANIEL, THERE IS SOMETHING HAPPENING IN LAS VEGAS. STEPHEN HAS--
I WATCH THE NEWS, WONG.
IT'S THE DEVIL THING, RIGHT?
DANNY RAND.
THE IMMORTAL IRON FIST. IN NEED OF SOMETHING TO PUNCH.

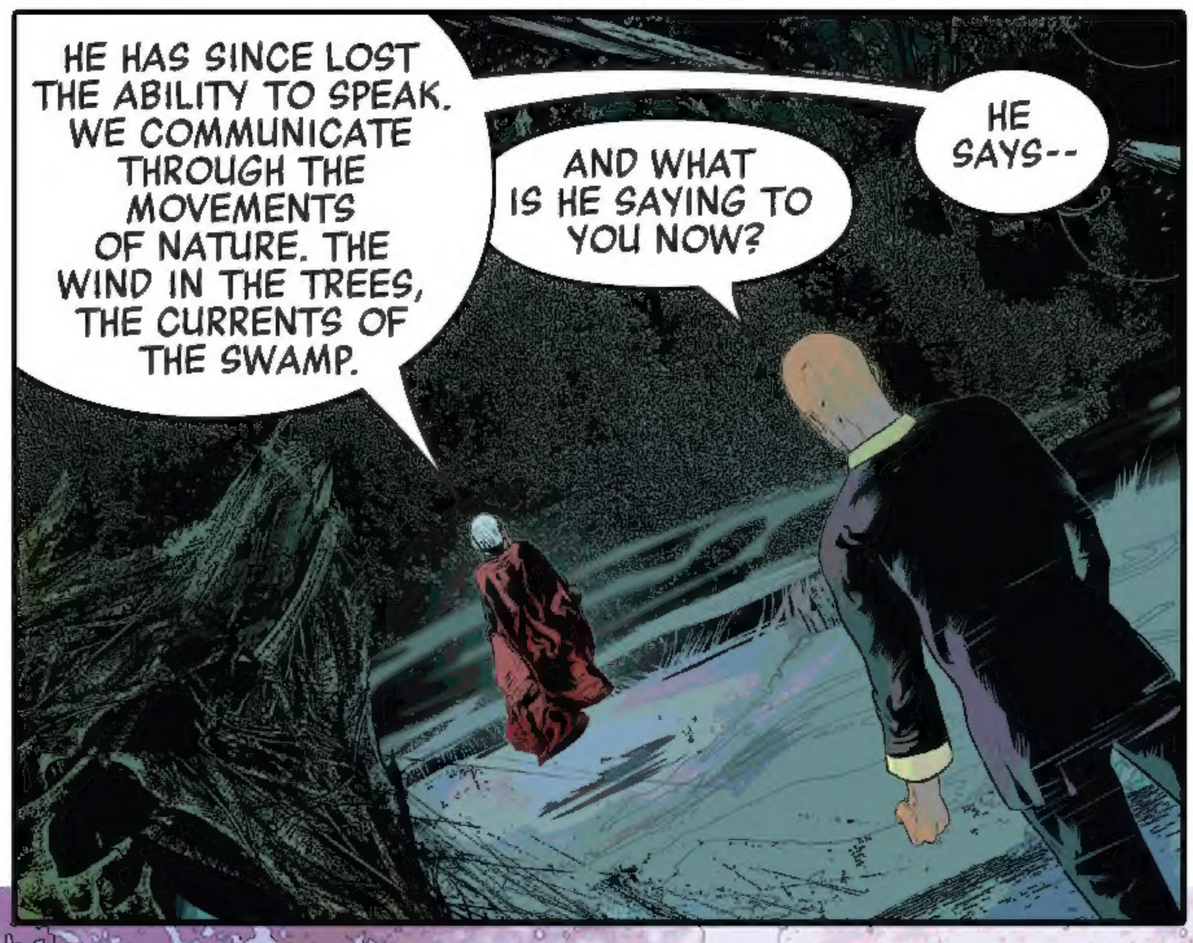
LET'S DO IT.

NO. I'M SORRY, I'VE GOT OTHER THINGS TO ATTEND TO--I'M OUT.
BUT GOOD NEWS, GENTLEMEN--
MOON KNIGHT.
OUT.

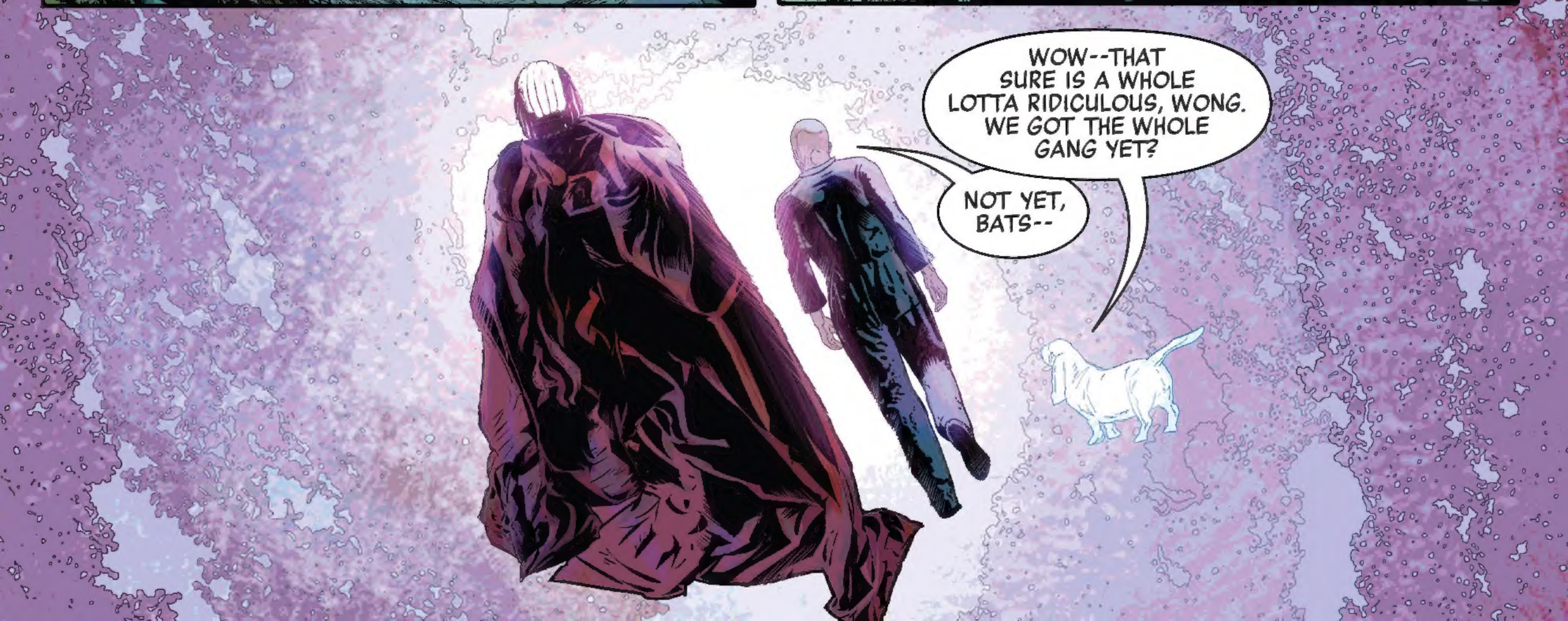
I'M IN.
MISTER KNIGHT.
IN, BUT OUT OF HIS MIND.

OUTSIDE CITRUSVILLE, FLORIDA.
I CAME HERE TO RECONNECT WITH THE EARTH--TO FIND SOME PEACE IN THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF THE LIFE CYCLES.
I UNDERSTAND, DOCTOR VOODOO. AND WHO BETTER TO HELP YOU WITH THAT--
JERICHO DRUMM.
BROTHER VOODOO. A VERY STRANGE DOCTOR.

--THAN THE LEGENDARY MAN-THING.
ONE THING PERPLEXES ME, THOUGH--I THOUGHT HE HAD LEARNED TO SPEAK AGAIN?
MAN-THING.
GIANT-SIZED.

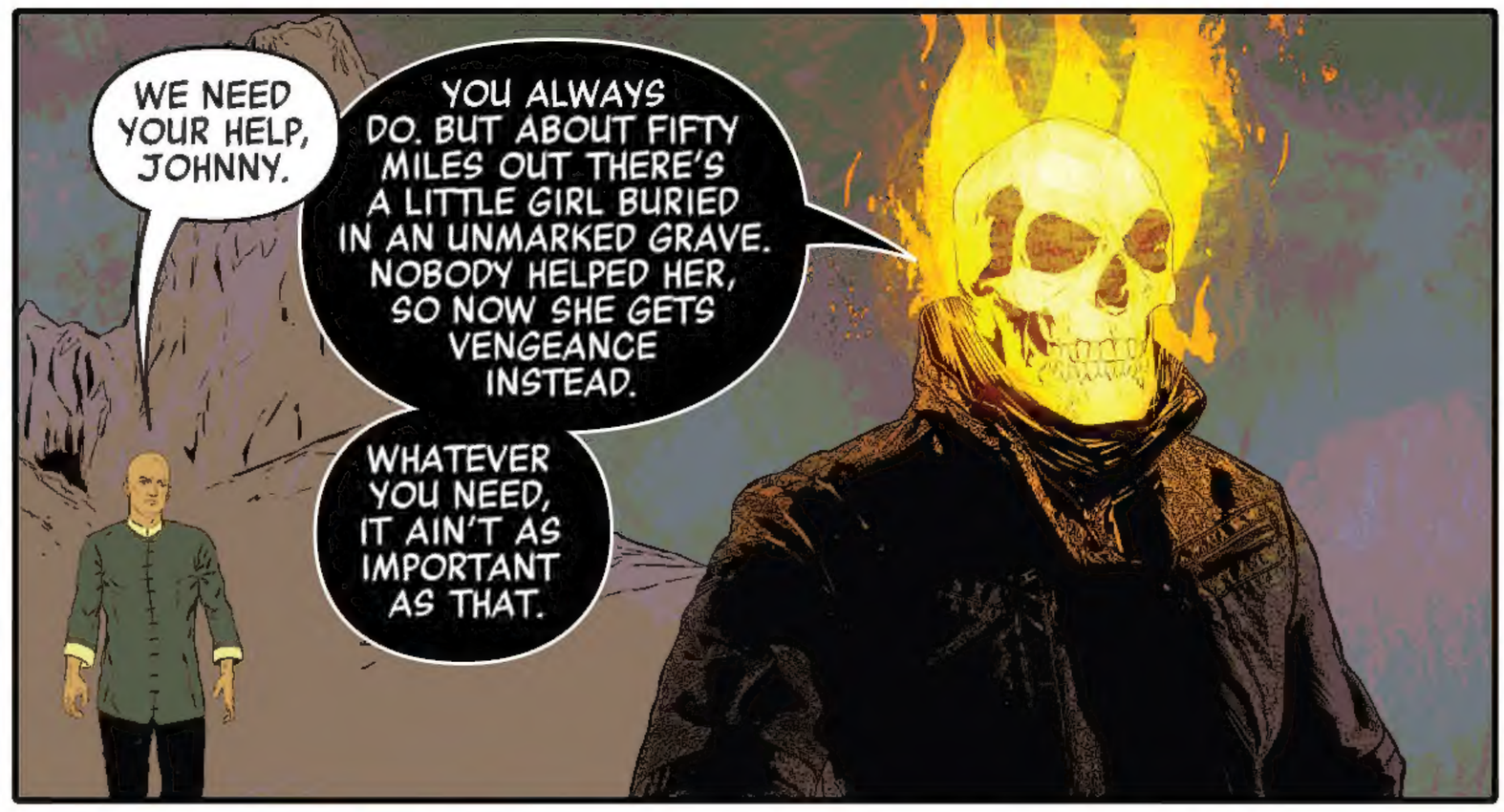

HE HAS SINCE LOST THE ABILITY TO SPEAK. WE COMMUNICATE THROUGH THE MOVEMENTS OF NATURE. THE WIND IN THE TREES, THE CURRENTS OF THE SWAMP.
AND WHAT IS HE SAYING TO YOU NOW?
HE SAYS--

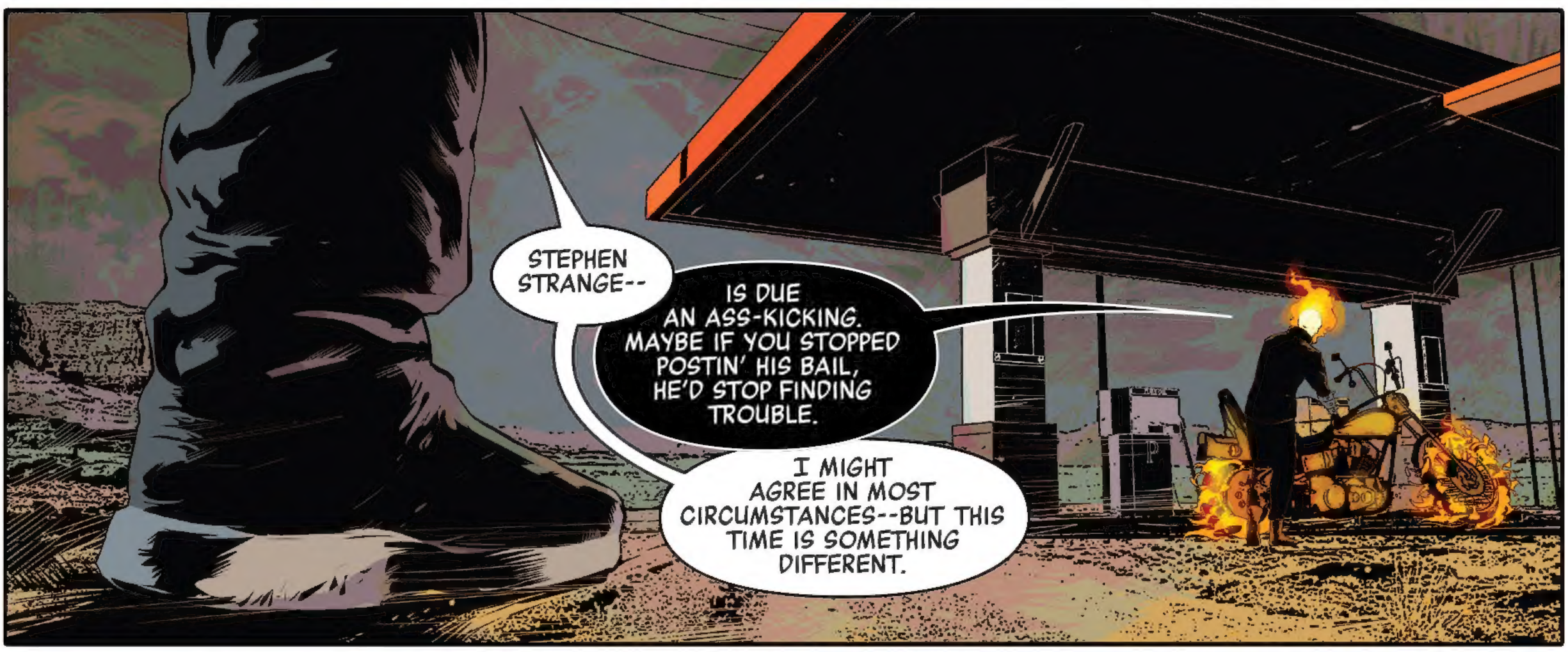
--HE'D LIKE FOR YOUR DOG TO STOP URINATING ON HIS LEG.
I CAN'T HELP IT! IT'S INSTINCT!


WOW--THAT SURE IS A WHOLE LOTTA RIDICULOUS, WONG. WE GOT THE WHOLE GANG YET?
NOT YET, BATS--

"--THERE IS ONE MORE."

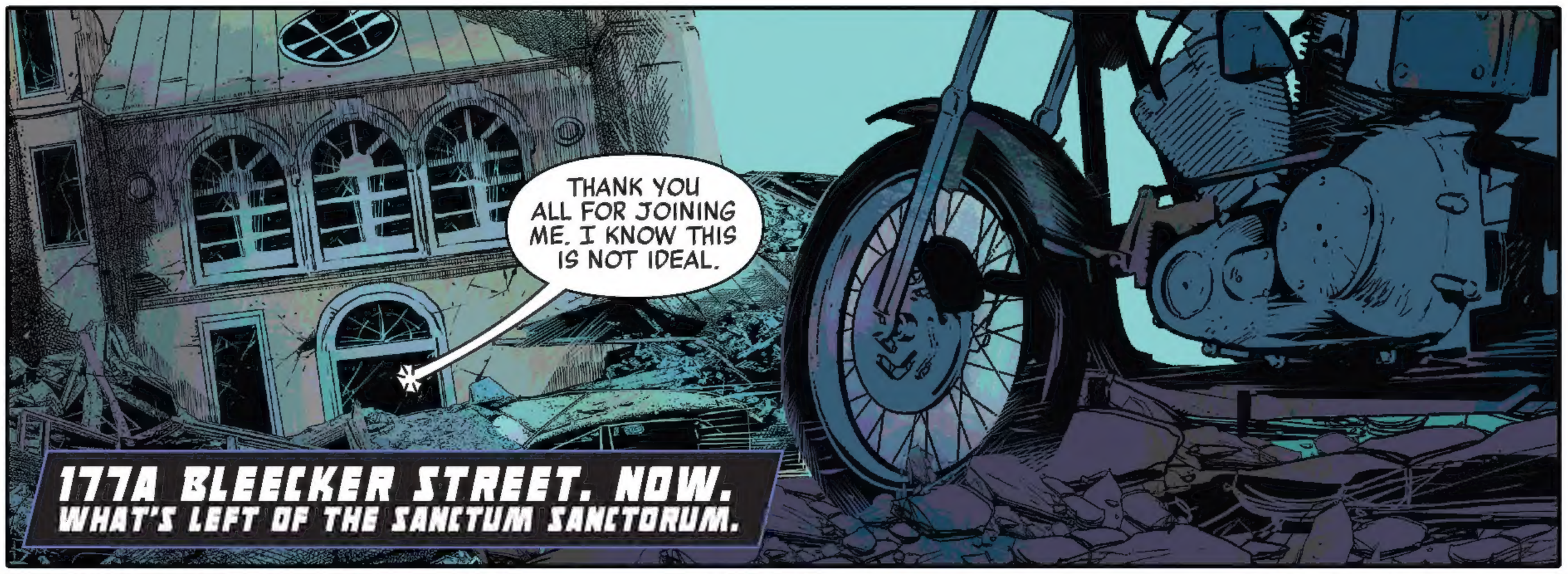
NO.

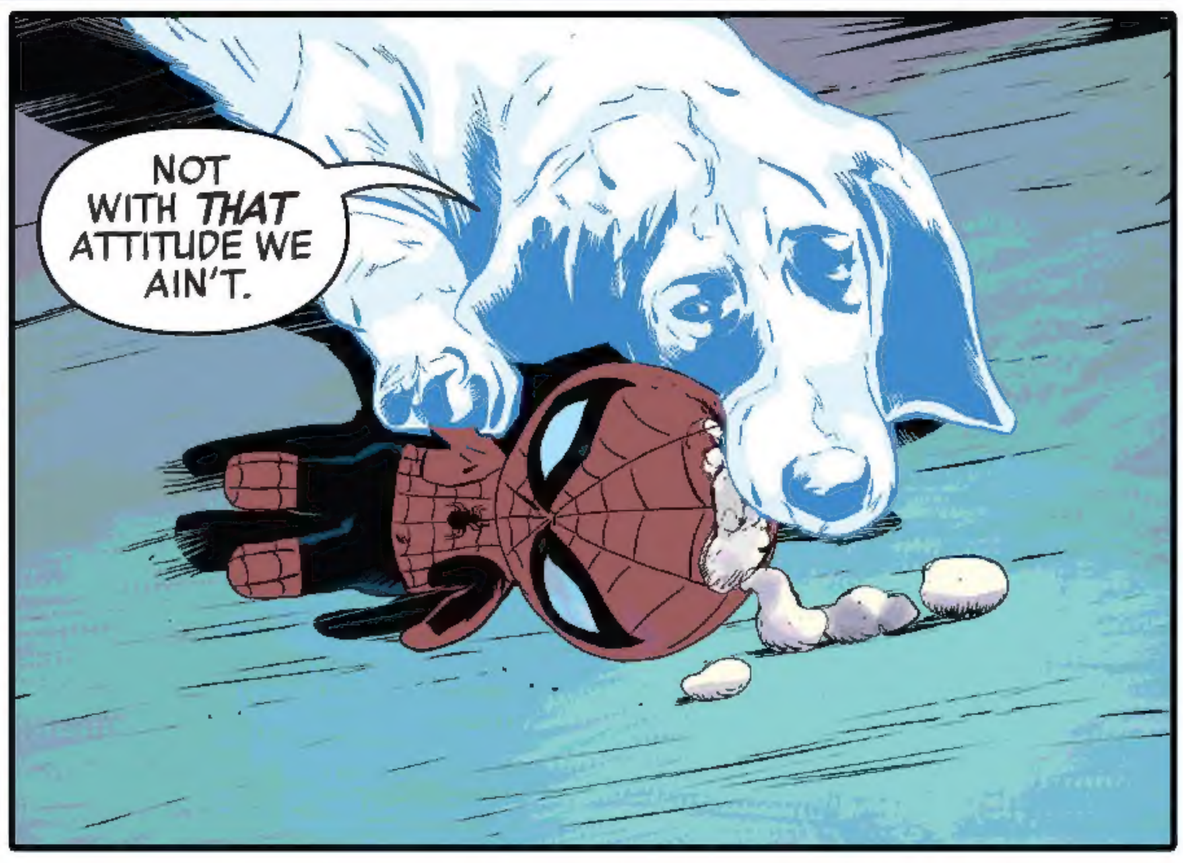

WE NEED YOUR HELP, JOHNNY.
YOU ALWAYS DO. BUT ABOUT FIFTY MILES OUT THERE'S A LITTLE GIRL BURIED IN AN UNMARKED GRAVE. NOBODY HELPED HER, SO NOW SHE GETS VENGEANCE INSTEAD.
WHATEVER YOU NEED, IT AIN'T AS IMPORTANT AS THAT.


STEPHEN STRANGE--
IS DUE AN ASS-KICKING. MAYBE IF YOU STOPPED POSTIN' HIS BAIL, HE'D STOP FINDING TROUBLE.
I MIGHT AGREE IN MOST CIRCUMSTANCES--BUT THIS TIME IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT.

THAT RIGHT? THEM HOARY HOSTS OF HOGGOTH FINALLY GET SICK OF HEARIN' THEIR NAME GET TAKEN IN VAIN?
WOULD THAT IT WERE SO SIMPLE. HE'S UNLEASHED A TERRIBLE EVIL ON THE EARTH. AN EVIL YOU KNOW ALL TOO MUCH ABOUT.

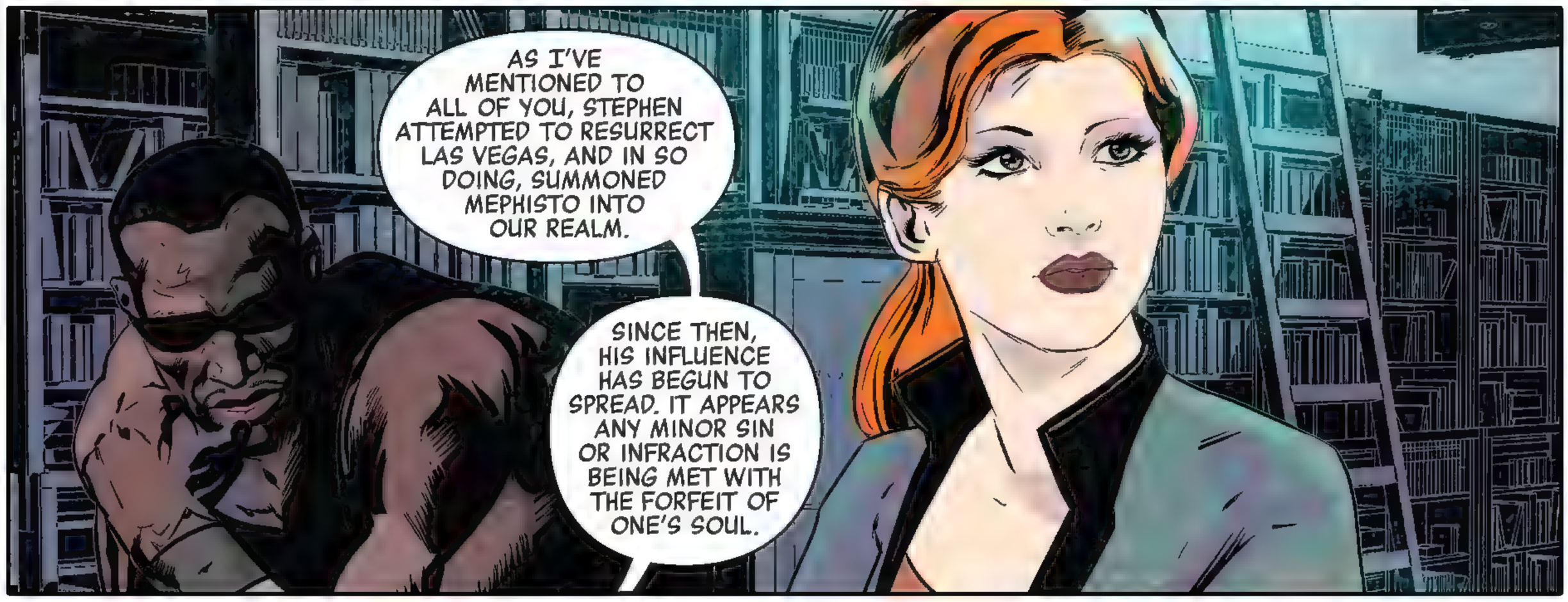
IT'S MEPHISTO, JOHNNY. MEPHISTO HAS COME TO EARTH--AND HE'S BROUGHT HELL WITH HIM.





SHUT UP, BATS.

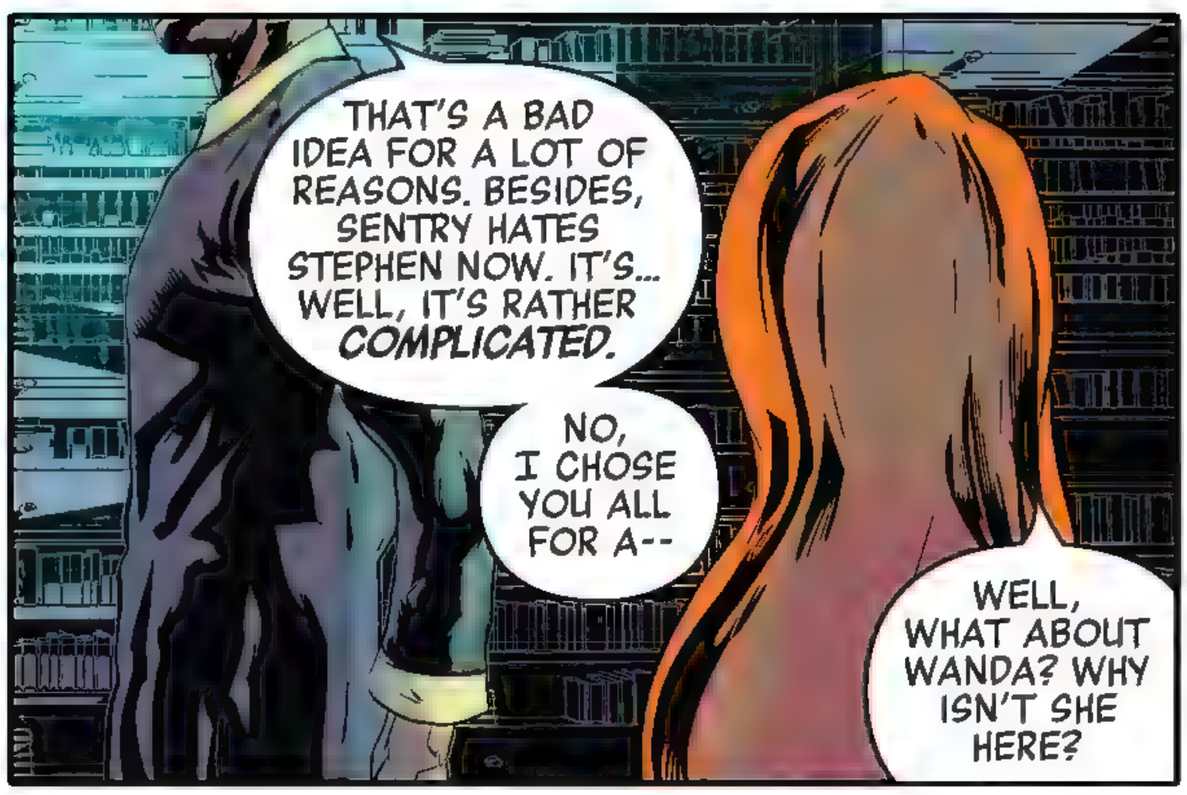
OKAY, NOW, LET'S GET DOWN TO IT, SHALL WE?

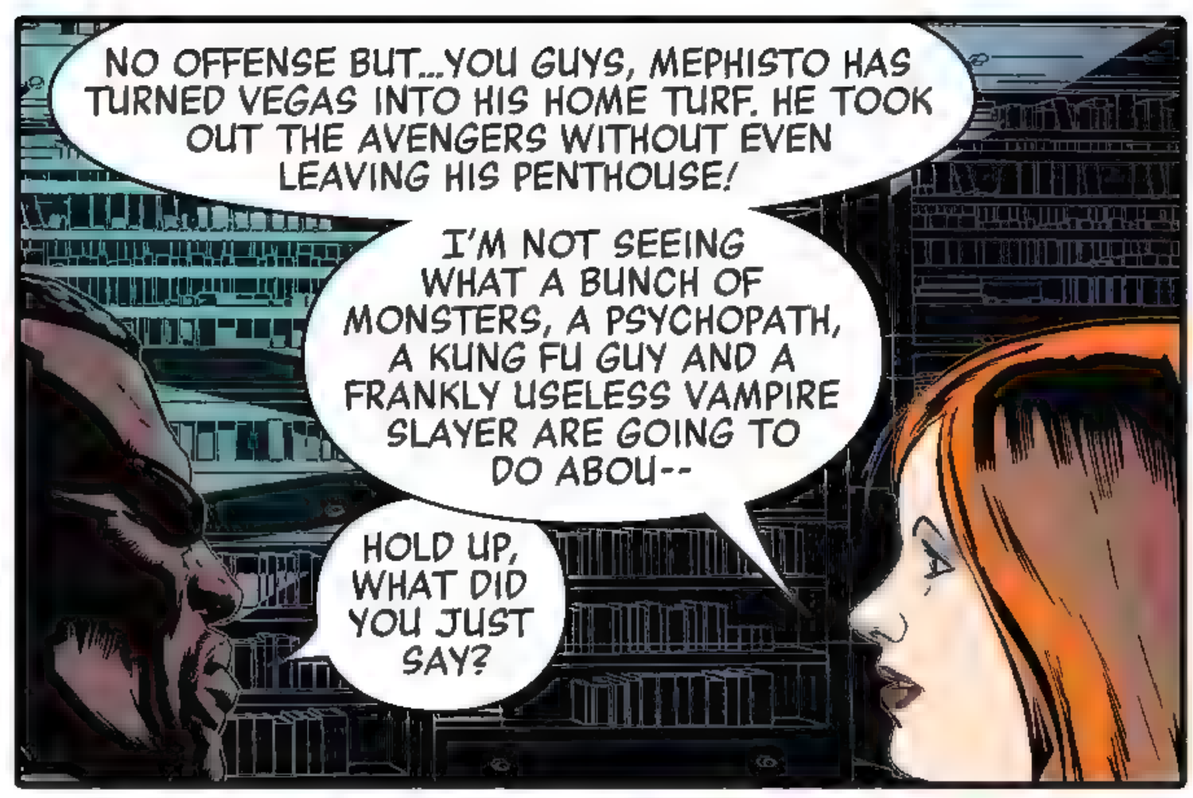

AS I'VE MENTIONED TO ALL OF YOU, STEPHEN ATTEMPTED TO RESURRECT LAS VEGAS, AND IN SO DOING, SUMMONED MEPHISTO INTO OUR REALM.
SINCE THEN, HIS INFLUENCE HAS BEGUN TO SPREAD. IT APPEARS ANY MINOR SIN OR INFRACTION IS BEING MET WITH THE FORFEIT OF ONE'S SOUL.

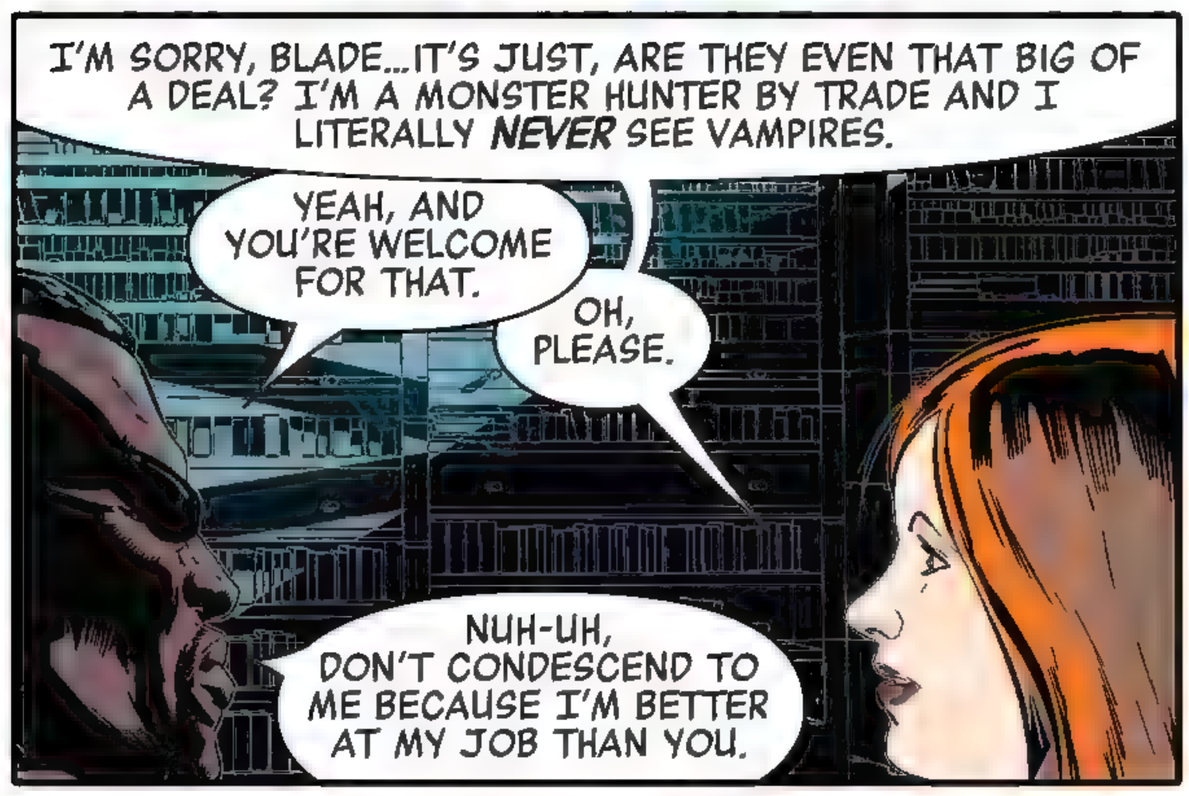
AS SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE AVENGERS, NAMELY BLACK PANTHER, CAPTAIN MARVEL, HAWKEYE, FALCON AND THOR, CAN NOW SADLY ATTEST.

THEY'LL BE OUR FIRST MAJOR OBSTACLE. I'VE OUTLINED EACH ONE OF YOUR ASSIGNMENTS IN THE FOLDERS IN FRONT OF YOU. PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO READ OVER THEM CARE--
YEAH, HEY, HOLD UP.
JOHNNY?

I KNOW IT'S SLIGHTLY OFF-BRAND, BUT... WASN'T THE DOC HANGING OUT WITH THE SENTRY LATELY?
THAT... FEELS LIKE IT COULD BE USEFUL.


THAT'S A BAD IDEA FOR A LOT OF REASONS. BESIDES, SENTRY HATES STEPHEN NOW. IT'S... WELL, IT'S RATHER *COMPLICATED.*
NO, I CHOSE YOU ALL FOR A--
WELL, WHAT ABOUT WANDA? WHY ISN'T SHE HERE?


NO OFFENSE BUT...YOU GUYS, MEPHISTO HAS TURNED VEGAS INTO HIS HOME TURF. HE TOOK OUT THE AVENGERS WITHOUT EVEN LEAVING HIS PENTHOUSE!
I'M NOT SEEING WHAT A BUNCH OF MONSTERS, A PSYCHOPATH, A KUNG FU GUY AND A FRANKLY USELESS VAMPIRE SLAYER ARE GOING TO DO ABOU--
HOLD UP, WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY?


I'M SORRY, BLADE...IT'S JUST, ARE THEY EVEN THAT BIG OF A DEAL? I'M A MONSTER HUNTER BY TRADE AND I LITERALLY *NEVER* SEE VAMPIRES.
YEAH, AND YOU'RE WELCOME FOR THAT.
OH, PLEASE.
NUH-UH, DON'T CONDESCEND TO ME BECAUSE I'M BETTER AT MY JOB THAN YOU.

HEY, WILL YOU TWO KNOCK IT OFF?!
ALSO, IT'S NOT JUST KUNG FU, OKAY? IT'S AN INCREDIBLY ANCIENT FORM OF FIGHTING THAT I--
HANG ON. WHY IS FIST EVEN HERE? HE'S MAGIC ADJACENT AT BEST!
WHAT DO YOU CARE? YOU DON'T EVEN WANT TO BE HERE!

LIKE YOU DO?!
GO FIGHT A DRAGON, RICH BOY!
ENOUGH!

ARE YOU ALL QUITE FINISHED?

(WHICH ONE IS THE PSYCHOPATH?)

I HAVE CHOSEN YOU ALL FOR A REASON. YOU ARE ALL...FOR THE MOST PART... WELL, EITHER DEAD, DAMNED, OR YOU CARRY DARKNESS WITH YOU.
NONE OF YOU ARE WITHOUT SIN.

I CHOSE YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE OUR ONLY HOPE OF FIGHTING MEPHISTO WITHOUT ADDING TO HIS RANKS.

AND, IF I'M BEING COMPLETELY HONEST, I CHOSE YOU BECAUSE, IF YOU DO GET TURNED, I BELIEVE IT IS WITHIN MY POWER TO BRING YOU DOWN BEFORE YOU HURT OTHERS.

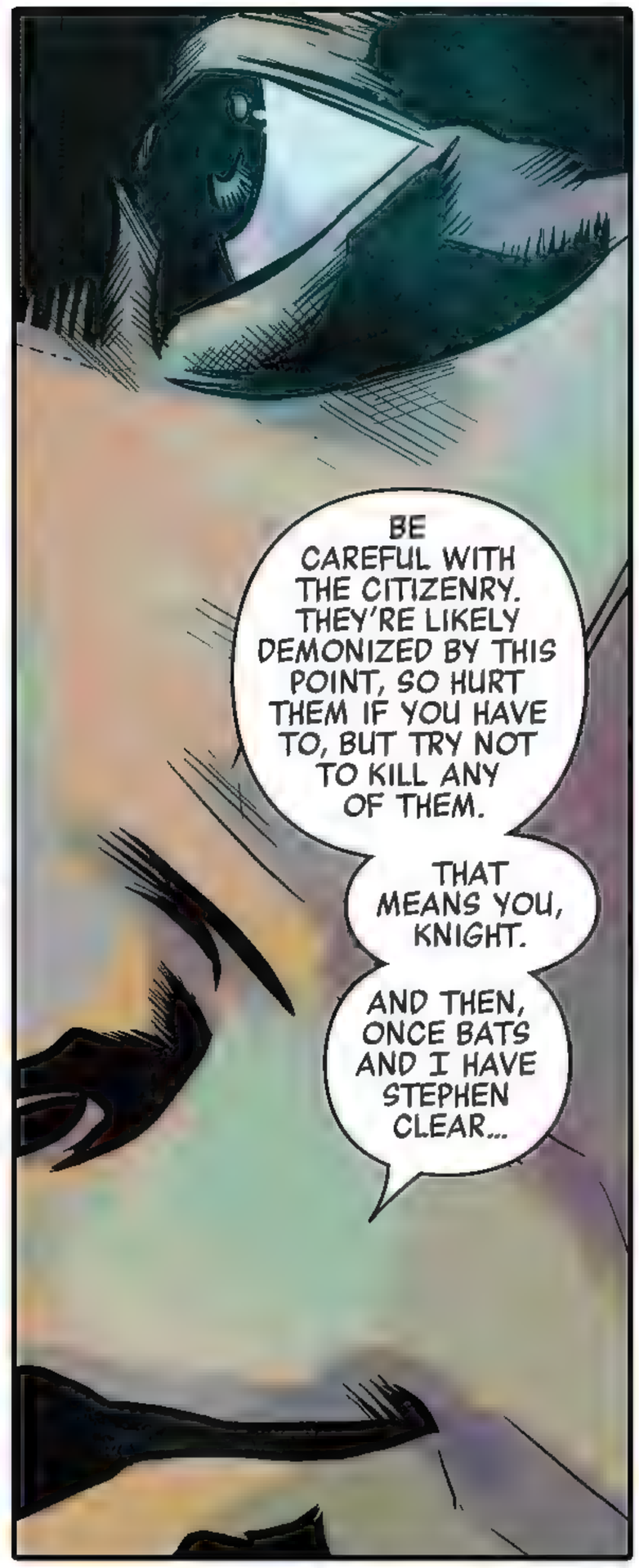
I AM A PRAGMATIC MAN. AND THIS IS THE WAY I'M DOING THIS. IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, THE SANCTUM HAS MANY DOORS THAT CAN TAKE YOU BACK HOME.
BUT BEFORE YOU GO, I WANT YOU TO ASK YOURSELF...

...WOULD STEPHEN DO IT FOR YOU?
WOULD HE THROW EVERYTHING HE LOVED STRAIGHT INTO HELL ITSELF TO SAVE YOU?
I KNOW HE WOULD FOR ME. I'VE SEEN HIM DO IT.

I WILL GO IN ALONE IF I HAVE TO.
BUT...I REALLY HOPE I DON'T HAVE TO.

SO, IF ANYONE HAS ANY LAST-MINUTE OBJECTIONS OR WANTS TO LEAVE, THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE. OTHERWISE, YOUR SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES ARE IN YOUR FOLDERS.

WE LEAVE IN 30.



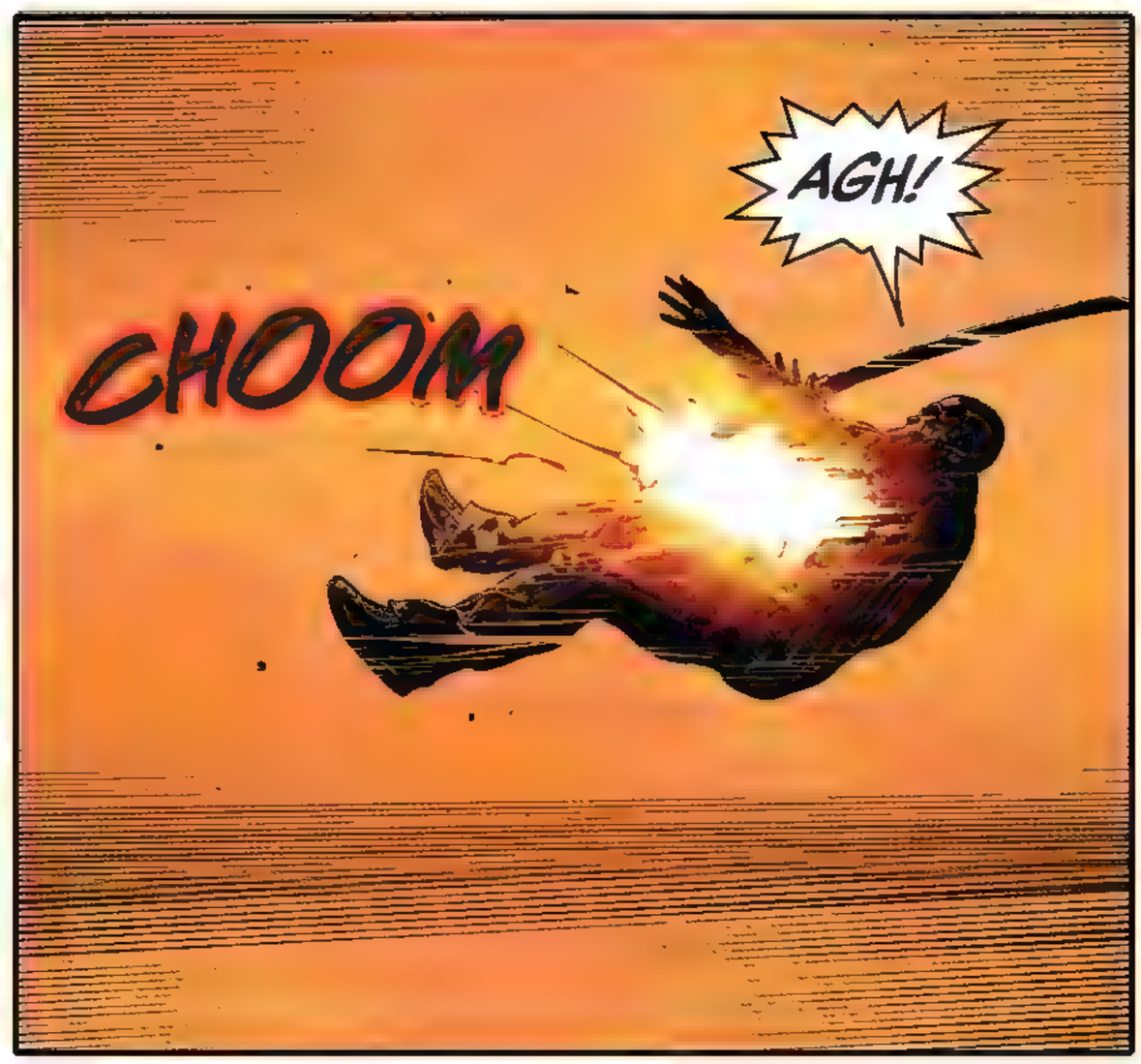
"...WE SEND THE DEVIL BACK TO HELL."

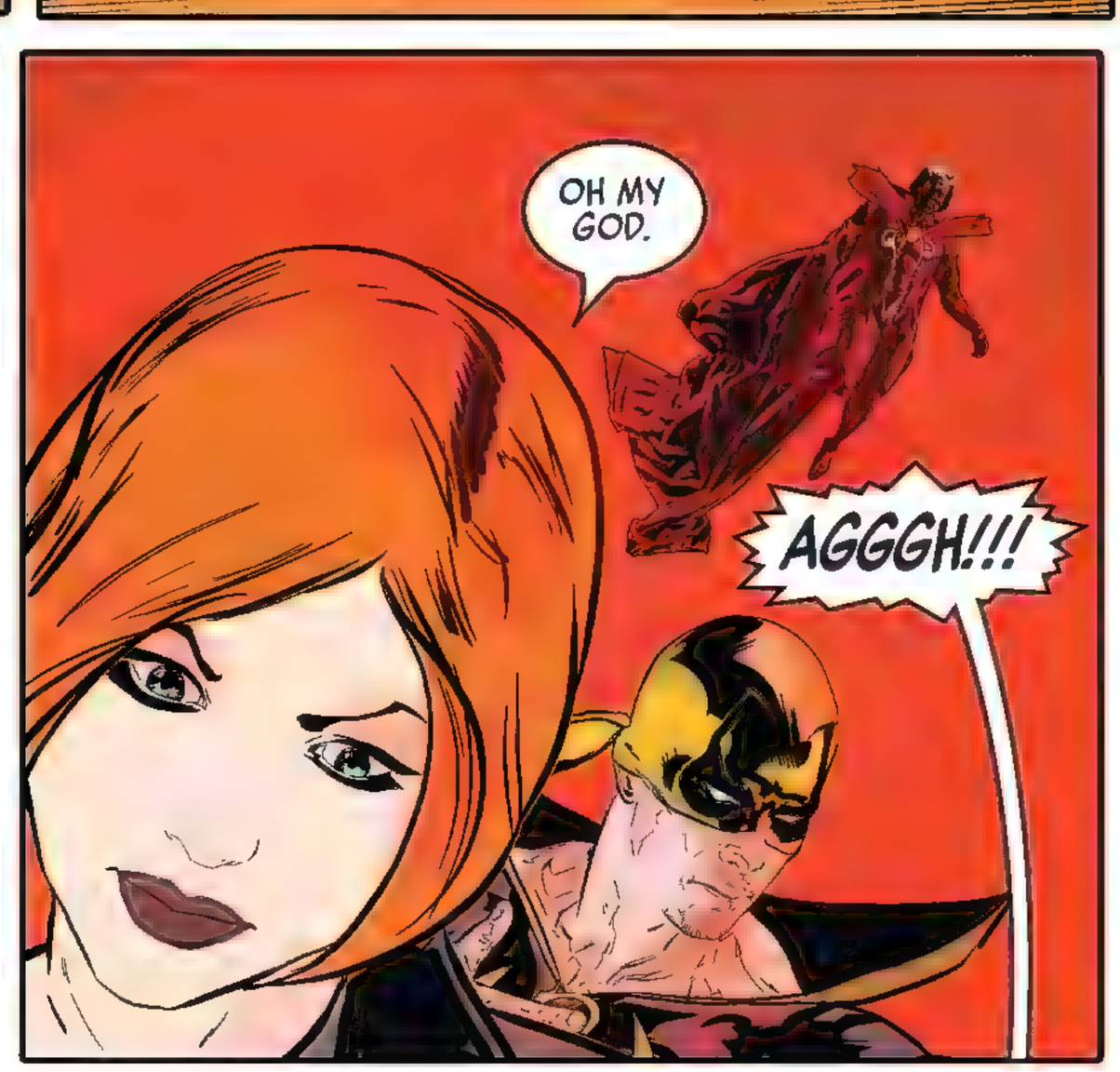
OKAY, HEADS UP, EVERYONE. THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE.

DAMN... WOULD YOU LOOK AT THAT...

WHAT? WHAT IS IT?

THE VEGAS STRIP.

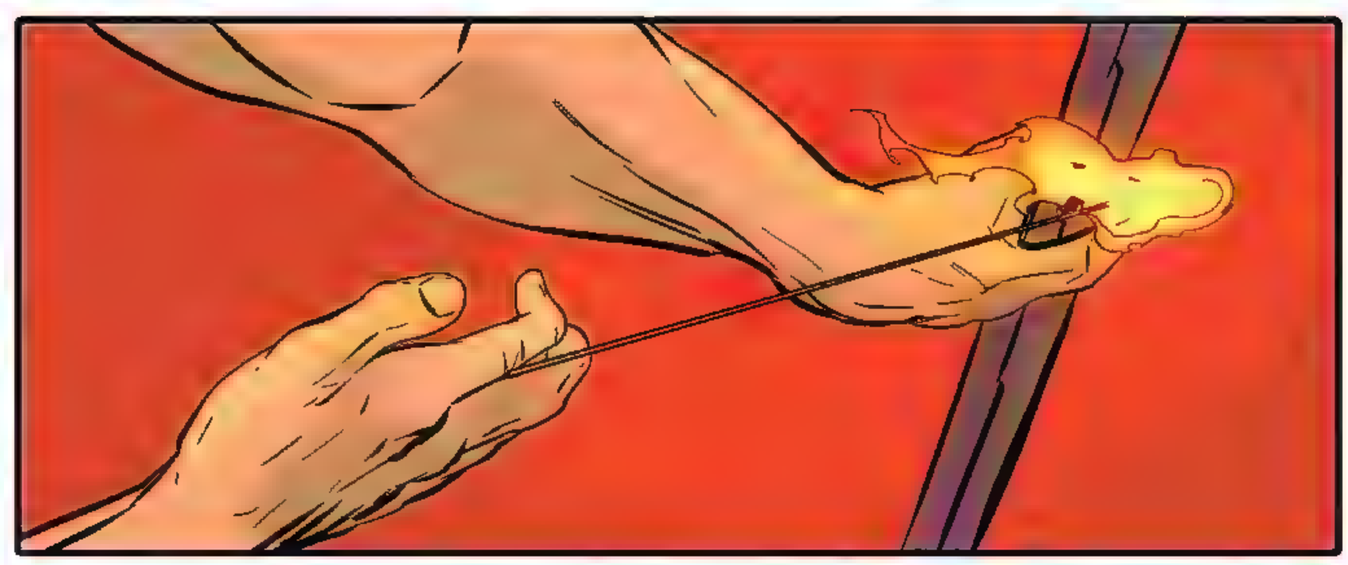




GET IT OFF!!!

JERICHO, TRY SOMETHING! THERE MUST BE A SPELL OR--
THIS IS AN ASGARDIAN ENCHANTMENT, DANIEL. I DON'T THINK I CAN--
GUYS...

...THIS IS ABOUT TO GET SO MUCH WORSE.



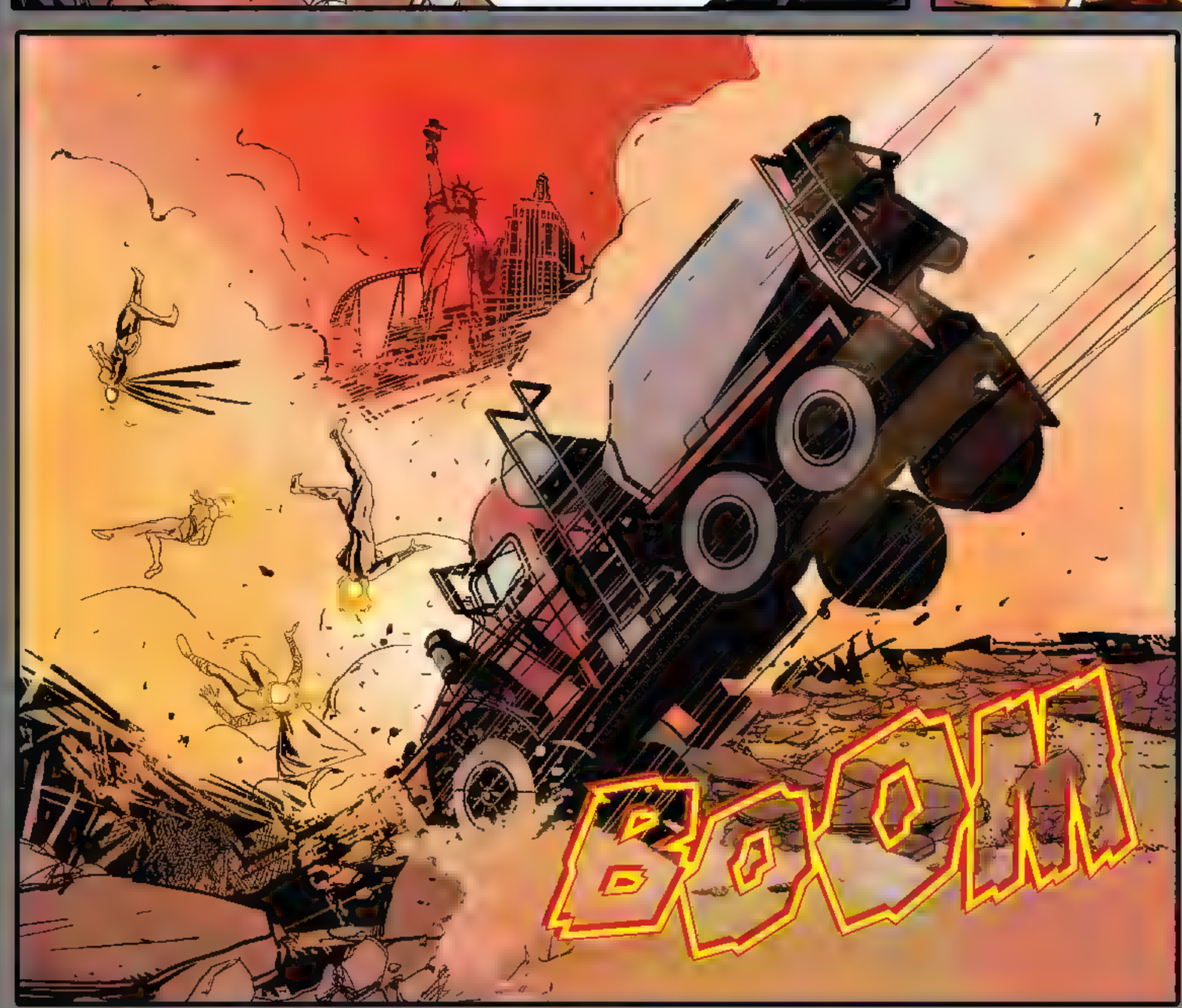
HEY, GUYS--AM I CRAZY...

...OR IS IT RAINING FIRE?

BEHIND ME! NOW!

AGH!
DAMN!
THEY'RE IMMUNE TO MY MAGIC! WE NEED TO FALL BACK!
AGREED. BUT WHERE WE GONNA FALL BACK TO...

...THAT'S SAFE FROM THEM?

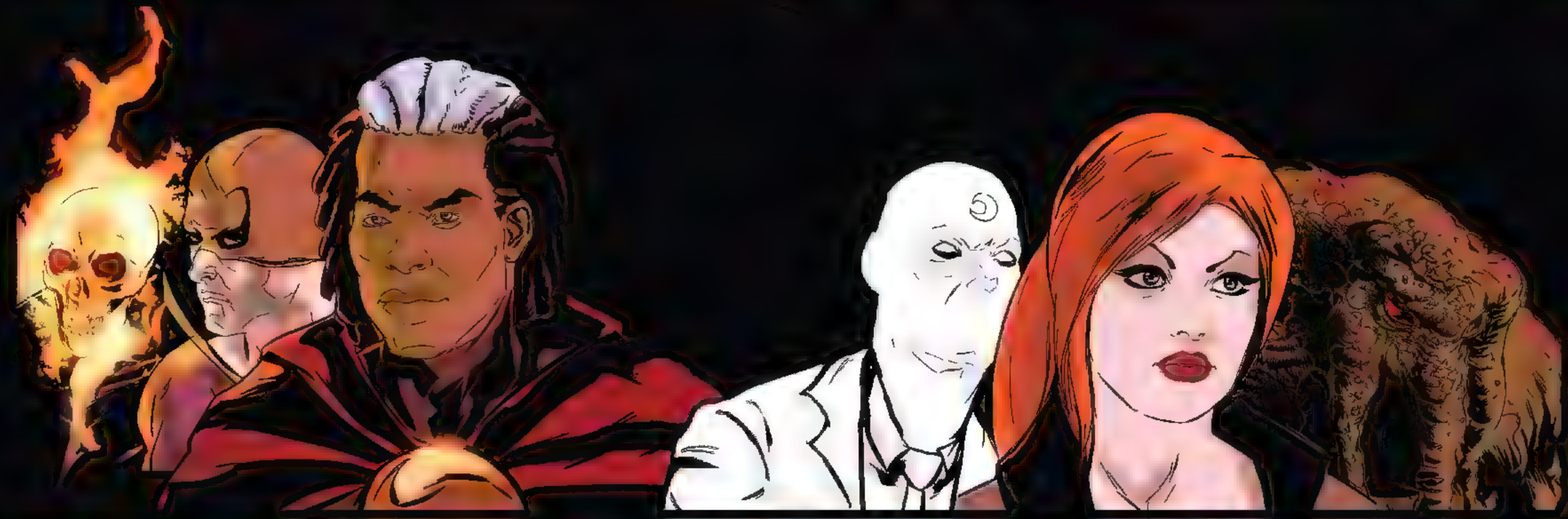

BOOM

A CEMENT TRUCK? WHO WOULD BE MAD ENOUGH TO--
ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE. HURRY!

COME ON-- THAT ISN'T GONNA KEEP THEM DOWN FOR VERY LONG.

BUT YOU'LL ALL BE SAFE WITH ME!

THE SCARLET SPIDER.
FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDER-CLONE.



WE JUST GONNA LEAVE EM' LIKE THAT? WONG, BLADE'S GOT THAT HAMMER BURNIN' A HOLE IN HIS CHEST! WE GOTTA--
I KNOW, BATS.

BUT WE AREN'T HERE FOR BLADE. WE'RE HERE FOR--

FWOOOSH

WELL, HOW NICE OF YOU TO COME!

WELCOME TO HELL, OLD FRIEND.
...STEPHEN?!
TO BE CONTINUED!
TO FIND OUT HOW STEPHEN BECAME A GHOST RIDER, CHECK OUT DOCTOR STRANGE #387!

DOCTOR STRANGE
SORCERER SUPREME WITH SOMETHING TO PROVE.
MEPHISTO
RULER OF A REALM OF HELL; COLLECTOR OF SOULS, CORRUPTOR OF GOOD.
WONG
A POWERFUL MYSTIC AND STEPHEN'S LONGTIME FRIEND AND ASSISTANT, WONG RECENTLY LEFT HIS POST OVER AN ETHICAL DISAGREEMENT.
BATS
A VERY GOOD BOY, BATS DIED WHILE PROTECTING STEPHEN STRANGE, SO LOKI RESURRECTED HIM AS A GHOST.
BLADE
A.K.A. ERIC BROOKS. PARTIALLY INFECTED WITH VAMPIRISM AT BIRTH WHEN HIS MOTHER WAS BITTEN, BLADE HUNTS CREATURES OF THE NIGHT.
ELSA BLOODSTONE
DAUGHTER OF A ONCE-IMMORTAL, NOW-DEAD MONSTER HUNTER, ELSA INHERITED HER FATHER'S JOURNALS, BLOODGEM POWERS AND VOCATION.
IRON FIST
A.K.A. DANNY RAND. ORPHANED MILLIONAIRE DANNY WAS RAISED IN THE IMMORTAL CITY K'UN-LUN, AND WON THE MYSTICAL POWER OF THE IRON FIST.
MOON KNIGHT
A.K.A. MARC SPECTOR/ JAKE LOCKLEY/STEVEN GRANT/MR. KNIGHT, EX-MERCENARY DISCIPLE OF THE EGYPTIAN MOON GOD KHONSHU.
DOCTOR VOODOO
A.K.A. JERICHO DRUMM. FORMER PSYCHOLOGIST AND MASTER OF VOODOO MAGIC, JERICHO RECENTLY FOUGHT EVIL AS PART OF THE AVENGERS UNITY SQUAD.
MAN-THING
FORMERLY THEODORE SALLIS. VICTIM OF AN ACCIDENT MIXING SUPER-SOLDIER SERUM AND SWAMP MAGIC, GUARDIAN OF THE NEXUS OF ALL REALITIES, WHOEVER KNOWS FEAR BURNS AT HIS TOUCH.
GHOST RIDER
A.K.A. JOHNNY BLAZE. FORMER STUNT RIDER JOINED TO A SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE.
THE SCARLET SPIDER
A.K.A. BEN REILLY. RESURRECTED SPIDER-POWERED PETER PARKER CLONE, BEN'S BEEN THROUGH ENOUGH TO DRIVE ANYONE MAD, BUT HE'S TRYING TO BE GOOD.
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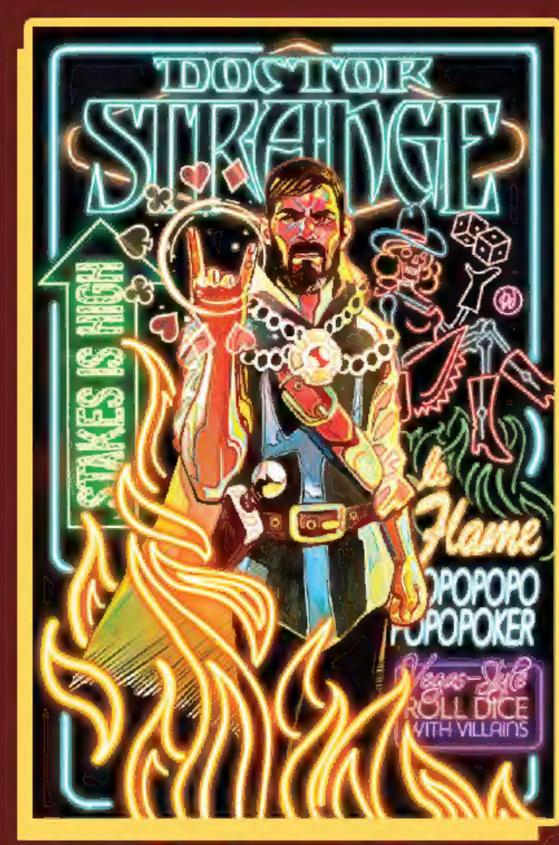
ALAN FINE
DOCTOR STRANGE CREATED BY
STAN LEE & STEVE DITKO
DAMNATION

FOLLOW THE ROAD TO DAMNATION NOW THROUGH APRIL IN THE PAGES OF DOCTOR STRANGE; BEN REILLY: SCARLET SPIDER; IRON FIST; & DAMNATION: JOHNNY BLAZE GHOST RIDER

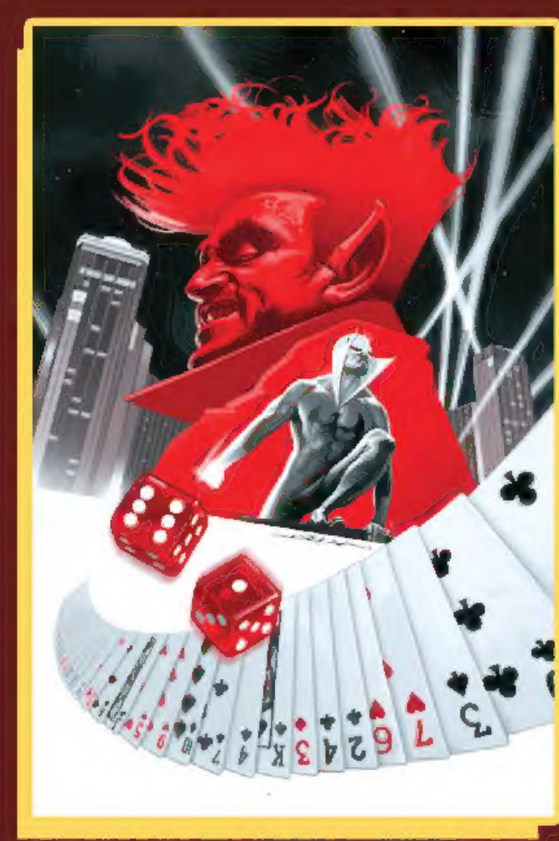
DOCTOR STRANGE: DAMNATION 3

BEN REILLY: SCARLET SPIDER 15

DOCTOR STRANGE 387



IRON FIST 78



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